

Fire Station Building Committee – Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday October 8, 2020

Time: 4:00 PM

Place: City Webex

Chairs Statement: This meeting is not being recorded, videotaped and broadcasted. If any other persons present are recording, videotaping or broadcasting this meeting you must notify the chairperson at this time.

City via WebEx and citizen Jaydon Grazick Recording

Agenda:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call by Chairperson.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 24, 2020.
3. Temporary Fire Station Subcommittee report, and next action steps.
4. Presentation by Neil Joyce and Dennis Ross regarding costs of the Project.
5. Continuing discussion on Committee presentation before City Council for additional funds for appropriation.
6. Set next meeting date.
7. Vote to go into Executive Session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property at Main Street and Coombs Avenue if the Chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.
8. Adjourn meeting

Called to order at 1603hrs.

Roll Call of Members Present: Chair Persons Singer and Hawkins, Gregg Diefendorf, John Andrews, Carole Collins, Steve Drakulich, Herb Forgey, Liz Gilman, Ed Jarvis, Peter McIver, Amy McMahan, David Moscaritolo, Chief Strahan, Jennifer Stromsten, Jean Wall, Mayor Wedegartner, Katrina Pacheco, Dennis Ross, OPM Neil Joyce

Motion by Mayor 2nd by David M to accept minutes for September 24th 2020 meeting.

Temporary Fire Station Update:

David M – Held meeting yesterday, weather and tech issues resulted in dropped meeting. However, we were able to review department needs and Dennis and Neil were able to put together some basic conceptual drawings. Spoke about pre-pricing on structures, we don't have full architectural drawings so final cost is hard to determine until then.

Neil- waiting for complete drawings estimated from one vendor, 750k/24 month for 2 apparatus bay buildings and 250k for housing units. Cost is for buildings not for fit out.

David S- is there an advantage to lease/buy

Neil – Lease can be funded from operating budgets and may not impact borrowing authority

Herb – Only buildings included not HVAC?

Neil – Lease includes HVAC but would need completion from local contractors.

David M – Committee needs to look at details of lease and structures.

David S – Council is going to want details will the sub committee be prepared with better details by November?

Mayor – We want to spend the right amount but no more than the right amount. We will need to evaluate the right dollar value of lease vs buy.

David M – we need the contract with the architect then we can plow through the details to get pricing. Until then we can get solid details but not full drawings without an architect.

Mayor- Monday speaking with the lawyer and should be able to get this done soon.

Jarvis – can we share the drawings from yesterday?

David M – will send out.

Chief – Jarvis, Forgey, and retired fire captain C. Seaman plus one or two permanent firefighters will be working on figuring out how to move and how to store antiques and memorabilia of fire station.

David S – We know the Library includes the demo but may not include careful removal. Asks to have Dave M to work with Library to figure out what their budget includes.

Chief- Working out possible storage costs on historical items.

Dennis – Mural will likely cost more than cupola for removal.

Mayor can we take really good photos to recreate the mural if needed

David M – Next temp meeting is 19th

Presentation regarding costs:

David S – asks OPM to review costs of the project minus the temp costs.

Neil – There's been no change in figures. 15m for station and 1.7 for temp. Gathering information from vendors on temp and coming more into focus.

Dennis – Had a request for more breakdown of sq ft which they've submitted for layout

Mayor – Just received a counter and need time to review. Will have missing information for tomorrow. No more info until next meeting.

Pres Stempel-Rae – Submitted order for 15m doesn't include the 1.7 needed for temp?

Mayor/Liz explain the order and borrowing requirements regarding the funding gap.

Neil/Dennis – share drawings of site, will send drawings out to committee after meeting.

Mayor – Thanks Dennis' team for their work and reminds folks that were still not settled on site.

Steve – Likes renderings, his experience with cupolas is very hard to remove, likes site with cupola on ground.

Chief – Fort Washington PA Station, search web for design, preferred

Funding :

David S – Does appear that 16.7m is needed for the project, round to 17m. Liz presented asking for 5m more would not cause an audit or of disruption to the city's finances. Trying to balance and suggests asking for 5m additional for the FD. There are other avenues to cover the temp costs. Library offered up some fundraising money and some grants available.

Mayor – Temp comes first and therefore the costs are spent first. There's possible revenue sources, grants, etc. that will offset the total number.

Butch – Supports David's approach, believes that 15m is the stretch for the city and we will work hard to offset the funding gap.

Jen – Agrees with approach, we are proceeding with caution and looking for ways to find other monies, just have to be committed to getting the funding we need both for the FD and for long term operation cost.

Jean – where does the purchase cost of coombs come into this?

David S – budgeted at 900k

Jean – is that on top of the 15 and the 1.7?

David S – no it is included in the 15m cost

Jarvis – makes sense to fund at 15m. Gives city and those working to make this happen a reasonable budget to work in and if we have to come back down the road we can show that we did our due diligence.

Steve – to be clear we are discussing a 13.3m fire station because we're going to have to fund the 1.7m temp

David S – yes but nobody is disputing the need for more money the question is where it might come from

Mayor – Steve that is correct but the plan is to design to 15m and find other funding. We may have to come back to the council. 15m gets us going and if we need other funding we will seek every other means before going to the council

Herb – 15m and then were able to get grants, are the grants additional or will they offset the 15m

McIver – Ask Mayor to review additional available revenue streams to those on today's meeting

Mayor – reviews where the city is perusing those avenues. Possible CDBG monies, USDA loans, offsetting cost based on debt schedule.

Carole – 50kw limit on solar in downtown arrays and appreciates Dennis' efforts to detail solar on buildings

Chief – If city council approves the 5 million the next day we begin design, what dollar number are we designing to? We will have to build to a specific budget curious to what we will be excluding from the budget

David S – We have a commitment from the library foundation to fundraise and if the library and the fire station are together in this we can save the money needed and raise what were short to build a successful project.

Chief – Has no doubt in being successful at getting grants and question is really in regards to a design position and procurement

Dennis – that is a really good question and one that is answered further into the project. Cuts will not impact operations but will limit the scope of what can be built.

Pres Stempel-Rae – While projects are separate they are combined and while thinking of it as a 25m project sound fine, the cost of building anything is skyrocketing does the budget have room for that.

Neil – When we ran numbers for escalation, we ran them out to Jan. '22 which were based on experience and best estimates. Anticipated bid date is early next summer.

Dennis – agrees with timeline and estimates

Pres Stempel-Rae – important to ensure that the residents paying the bill, estimates of timelines and funding and where it will be spent in the future are important from a transparency standpoint to the citizens

Mayor- I will send you all that information. These are all estimates, we have not gone to bid and these costs could go down. We are designing to a 15m figure and if it is a 16-17m number down the road we will find other avenues until we cannot do so.

Councilor Ricketts – As a councilor I am thinking about this as three projects-Library, fire station, and temp station. My thinking is not that we want a fire station we need a fire station. Put the numbers together and give us one big number so that everyone knows the total cost. Concerned that the firefighters will be stuck in temp if something happens with the budget and the full building is somehow delayed.

Councilor Forgey – Going to echo Pres Stempel-Rae and Councilor Ricketts that would like to know the total breakdown and present it in its entirety to the council. Many citizens are very concerned with the costs of both projects and urges committee to have conversations with the public when they ask of the committee to educate on the cost of the project.

David S – Thankful of the councilor's involvement in tonight's meeting so that they can feel comfortable in moving this project forward. Maybe instead of putting forward the 5m request we should submit a full request as some councilors have suggested. Maybe we should wait.

McIver – Procedural question on financial orders, can the council raise the appropriation once its been submitted? Only seen them cut not raised.

Pres Stempel-Rae – if the 5 is inadequate and the 7 is more appropriate then requesting the full number and using grant numbers to reduce that figure.

David S- agrees you cannot go above the first reading.

Liz – reviews financial information regarding the significance of the 5m funding. What we're saying is that it will cost more than the 15m but we are going to find the additional monies from somewhere else not borrowing. Questionable move to increase past the 15.

Councilor Ricketts – this is only a small fraction of the council on today's meeting, so we don't represent the full council. There's still many unknowns on the project and there's many factors to consider

Mayor – the purchase of the property is included in the 15m and it is included in the top costs of the project. These are as accurate numbers as we can get.

Councilor Forgey – we always associate capitol projects with what the funding is and where it comes from, can the authorization say that 5 million is from borrowing and the additional funds are detailed on where like pay downs or grants

Liz – yes but we don't have the grants in hand so really its just the authorization on the borrowing and being under a time crunch we don't have all of that worked out yet. Understands the uncertainties but we have to take baby steps. When we go to bid we keep the pricing down and we don't ask for more than we need.

Jen – the consequence of the bond rating review is that it could result in a down grade in our bonding rate?

Liz – that is correct and all of the debt could cost us more

Mayor – the sooner we can do this the better, interest rates are so low.

David S – it is a very good time to borrow money

Liz – interest cost is likely less than the escalation costs.

Chief – as long as the council knows that the grants are to go toward the project and not against the debt that comfortable.

Pres Stempel-Rae we're stepping really close to ground that sounds like we don't have the funds available to fund this

Liz – our concern is that we don't want to ask for more than what we need

David S – in a perfect world you are right but here were at the end of a really long series of events and trying to find complete funding to the project.

Councilor Desorgher – looking at the numbers it's looking like were at the edge but when we borrow it will be at the end of the project.

Liz – yes but rating agencies are looking at that we have added a significant amount of authorization. We are going to bond in 2024. There are many moving parts and many people are not comfortable with moving parts but were going to have to take them one at a time.

John Andrews – the burden of the library is really falling on the fire station project, but we better be under budget on the library so that we have some savings to put toward the fire station

David S – Next meeting will be in two weeks same time, October 22nd at 4pm

Executive Session:

Passed on agenda item, no additional information to warrant

Adjourn:

David S- like to thank everyone, very good discussion, lots of progress and discussion. Fasten your seat belts lots of hard work coming forward

Motion by Butch 2nd by Carole to adjourn, roll call vote, motion carries.

Meeting adjourn at 1816hrs